

U.S. Embassy, Moscow

Public Affairs Section Request for Grant Proposals: FY 2016 U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program

Announcement Type: Grant

Application Deadline: May 24, 2016

Total Funding: Up to \$1,650,000, pending the availability of funds

Funding Opportunity Number: DOSRUS-16-GR-003

Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.900

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2016

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2017

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2016 U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program

Eligible Applicants: Proposals may be accepted from U.S. or Russian organizations that meet the following criteria: 1) U.S. public and private non-profit organizations and academic institutions (both public and private) meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).; or 2) Russian non-commercial organizations and academic institutions that are not owned or controlled by the Government of the Russian Federation.

Any proposed sub-partners or sub-grantees must also meet the above parameters.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

To help foster greater contacts between Americans and Russians, the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassy Moscow, announces the FY 2016 U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program, which will provide multiple awards, up to **\$100,000** each, to support unique projects centered on **Russian-American, peer-to-peer collaboration, including an exchange of best practices between Russians and Americans on a topic of mutual interest.**

Projects must be non-political in nature and focus on Russian-American peer-to-peer dialogue or people-to-people engagement on themes of mutual interest that support greater understanding of shared values, institutional and professional development and strengthen the awareness of the merits of inclusive societies. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate innovative methodologies to accomplish program goals and foster interaction among peers. Successful projects will result in a product or outcome which enhances interaction and understanding between our two societies.

The Embassy reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and will determine the resulting level of funding for the award.

Funding Authority

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA).

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award: Grant

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2016

Approximate Total Funding: Up to \$1,650,000, pending availability of funds

Approximate Number of Awards: 16

Approximate Average Award: \$100,000

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$100,000

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2016, pending availability of funds

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2017

Additional Information: This funding is subject to restrictions. Please see sections C.1, C.2 and D.6 for more details.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1. Eligible applicants:

Proposals may be accepted from U.S. or Russian organizations that meet the following criteria: 1) U.S. public and private non-profit organizations and academic institutions (both public and private) meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).; or 2) Russian non-commercial organizations and academic institutions that are not owned, funded or controlled by the Government of the Russian Federation.

Any proposed sub-partners or sub-grantees must also meet the above parameters.

Commercial firms are not eligible to apply under this program.

Previous Peer-to-Peer grantees and sub-grantees/partners are not eligible to apply to the FY2016 competition.

C.2. Eligible projects:

Peer-to-Peer projects may focus on any theme that is not political in nature, including, but not limited to higher education, cultural exchange, journalism, environment, community development, social services, public health, civil society, etc. Projects should be original, creative, and dynamic and focus on sharing innovative practices unique to each country. Potential activities may include but are not limited to short-term exchanges, web-chats, seminars, interactive training, the development of online resources, and classroom activities. Potential applicants must ensure that program activities are directly tied to the goals of the project, and are encouraged to introduce new and unique approaches to facilitating peer-to-peer interaction and the exchange of best practices. Successful projects will be results-driven and have a multiplier effect.

Applicants are advised that Peer-to-Peer funding may not be used to benefit the Government of the Russian Federation at any level, including Russian government entities and Russian government officials or employees in any branch of government.

Please note: Projects that include political activity or focus primarily on academic or scientific research will not be considered eligible. The U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program is not intended to provide core administrative funding for applicant organizations or

to provide continued funding for existing, ongoing activities between two established partners. Budgets which focus primarily on project activities will be more competitive during the selection process. Project performance periods should not exceed 12 months.

C.3. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds:

There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, Embassy Moscow encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of the proposed project.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event a grantee does not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, the Embassy's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.4. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a) The applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), located at www.sam.gov, prior to submitting an application. Applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by an agency.

b) All Federal assistance recipients must have a Dun & Bradstreet number prior to funds disbursement. A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or requesting online at www.dnb.com. Russian applicants may call +7-495-646-2114.

c) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with all proposal and application requirements. Failure to do so will result in the proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

d) Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the PSI document.

e) Indirect Costs: An organization with an audited indirect cost rate negotiated with a cognizant federal government agency other than U.S. Department of State should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement as an addendum to the budget. If the applicant currently has an assistance award from U.S. Department of State, the agreement does not need to be submitted unless the

applicant has negotiated a new indirect cost rate with a cognizant agency other than U.S. Department during the past 12 months. An applicant must indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied.

If your organization does not have a NICRA, and the proposal budget has a line item for indirect cost charges, those indirect charges may not exceed 10%.

f) Taxes: Successful applicants are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for project participants. Because of the complexity of current tax laws regarding scholarship and fellowship income, it is strongly recommended that grantees consult with tax counsel regarding such compliance.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Embassy staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant grant cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated and committed through internal Embassy procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award.

Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submissions costs are at the applicant's expense.

D.1. ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE

Interested applicants may request the full text of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and other required forms via email to US-RussiaP2P@state.gov. These materials may also be found on www.grants.gov as well as the website of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow: <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us-russiadiialogue.html>. Applicants may also request these materials in writing to: Jennifer Washeleski, U.S. Embassy Moscow, Public Affairs Section, Bolshoy Devyatinskiy Pereulok 8, Moscow 121099, Russian Federation.

D.2. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will not be considered. Applicants must set forth accurate and complete information as required by this NOFO. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the USG is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

Applicants must ensure:

1. The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity.

2. **All documents are provided in English.** If a Russian document is provided (for example, a letter of support), an English translation of the document must also be included. Any document submitted without an English translation will not be accepted as part of the application materials. Documents provided only in Russian will not be reviewed by the committee, and therefore may result in an incomplete application packet.

3. All budgets are in U.S. dollars.

4. All pages are numbered.

5. Proposals must be submitted in Microsoft Word documents that are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

6. All supporting materials must be submitted in one of the following formats: .xls, .xlsx, .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg. No other file types will be reviewed.

A complete proposal packet will include the following required documentation:

1. Proposal Cover Page
2. Proposal Narrative (no more than 3 single-spaced pages)
3. Work Plan Chart
4. Detailed budget and budget narrative
5. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Forms
6. Other supporting documentation as necessary

Please be sure to retain a copy of all submission materials for your records. More information on each required section follows.

Section 1: Cover Page

Applicants should complete the required cover sheet template found in the application materials. The cover sheet should provide a snapshot of the partner organizations, key elements of the proposal and the amount of funding requested to complete the project. The cover page should not exceed one page.

Section 2: Proposal

The proposal narrative should not exceed three single-spaced pages. There is no set format or template for the narrative, however applicants should ensure that the narrative includes responses, at minimum, to the following key questions:

- **Program Description:** Describe the proposed project, focusing on the following:
 - What is the main issue/problem to be addressed?
 - Why is it significant?
 - What are the key activities under the project and how will the applicant successfully carry them out?
 - Who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project?
 - How is the project original and innovative?
 - What are the anticipated outcomes or results of the project?
- **Key Staff:** Provide resumes and background information on key staff involved in the project from both the U.S. and Russian sides. Please note whether any of the staff have participated in other U.S. Government-supported programs.

Section 3: Work Plan

Applicants should complete the required work plan template found in the application materials. The work plan should reflect a chronological list of anticipated project activities, indicating the *specific month* (September, October, etc.) an activity will take place. The work plan should clearly outline critical tasks related to program management as well as key project activities during the grant performance period.

Please note: The U.S. Embassy in Moscow anticipates awarding Peer-to-Peer grants in September 2016. Therefore applicants should plan for project activities to begin on or about September 30, 2016. Grants will only be approved for a 12-month program performance period.

Section 4: Budget

Using the required excel spreadsheet provided in the application materials, provide a detailed line item budget along with a budget narrative to support your funding request. Specific instructions for the budget template are included in the spreadsheet.

One of the criteria for evaluating Peer-to-Peer proposals will be cost-effectiveness. The budget should demonstrate efficient use of funds, appropriate to achieve project goals. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other budget line items should be consistent with project plans and activities.

Please refer to the general descriptions of budget categories on the first page of the excel spreadsheet as you build your budget. Applicants must include a detailed explanation of each line item. If you include an indirect rate, please provide your organization's NICRA as supporting documentation.

Eligible budget categories are as follows:

- Personnel (salaries and fringe benefits)
- Travel (visa, tickets, travel health insurance, lodging, per diem)
- Supplies (program materials, office supplies related to the project)
- Equipment (must be clearly related to project activities and above \$5,000)
- Contractual (consultants, interpreters, sub-grants, other)
- Other Direct Costs (room rental, communication etc.)
- Indirect Costs (if applicable)

Budget restrictions include:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the Federal award or with prior written approval.

- Expenses incurred before or after the specified dates of the award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received)

Please note: Before grants are awarded, the U.S. Embassy in Moscow reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the Peer-to-Peer program and availability of funds.

The Embassy may also make conditions and recommendations on proposals to enhance proposed projects. Conditions and recommendations are to be addressed by the applicant before approval of the award. To ensure effective use of funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify and/or justify costs.

Section 5: Application Forms for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The following forms are required and can be found online as part of the application package on www.grants.gov. Please be sure to complete and sign each form.

- SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A: Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B: Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs (for U.S. applicants)

Section 6: Other supporting documentation

Applicants should not forget to include the following required supporting documentation:

- Letter(s) of commitment (LOC) from partner organization. LOCs must be on organizational letterhead, signed by the person at the organization who has the authority to enter into a binding agreement with the primary applicant.
- NICRA Letter, if applicable

Please note:

Other items NOT required/requested for submission, but which may be requested if your application is selected for funding include:

- Copies of an organization or program audit within the last two (2) years
- Copies of relevant human resources, financial, or procurement policies
- Copies of other relevant organizational policies or documentation that would help the committee determine your organization's capacity to manage a federal grant award overseas and/or meet the eligibility requirements described in Section C.1 and D.6.
- Completion of a pre-award organizational information sheet, to determine what financial controls and standard operating procedures an organization uses to procure goods and services, hire staff and track time and attendance, pay for grant-related travel, and other financial transactions which may be necessary to undertake the activities in your application.

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

D.3 UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIED AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Russian applicants may call +7-495-646-2114. Please ensure that your UEI (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

Potential grantees are advised to begin the above registrations early, as to allow time to resolve technical issues that may arise in advance of the deadline.

D.4 SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applications must be submitted electronically via email to: US-RussiaP2P@state.gov

All applications must be submitted on or before **Tuesday, May 24, 2016, 6 p.m. Moscow Time.** Emails that show a time stamp produced by the Department of State system as having been received after 6 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration.

Begin the application process early, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. U.S. Embassy Moscow strongly advises early submission of applications to ensure delivery prior to the stated deadline.

There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

D.5 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”.

D.6 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

a) Restrictions on direct and indirect beneficiaries/participants: The funding provided to support the U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program is subject to restrictions under U.S. law including the restrictions in section 110(d)(1) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (22 USC § 7107(d)(1)) and section 7070(a) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Act, 2015 (Div. J, P.L. 113-235).

b) Indirect Charges: An organization with a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from a cognizant (primary) federal government agency should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement. Applicants should indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied and if any of the rate will be cost-shared. Organizations claiming indirect costs should have an established NICRA. If sub-grantees are claiming indirect costs, they should have an established NICRA that is also submitted with the proposal package. **If your organization does not have a NICRA, and the proposal budget has a line item for indirect cost charges, those indirect charges may not exceed 10%.** Information how to obtain a NICRA rate is listed Section G.

c) Pre-award Costs: Any costs incurred prior to the award start date in the Federal Notice of Award are incurred at the recipient's own risk. Approval of these costs require authorization of the Grants Officer to be considered allowable, will only be considered on a case-by-case basis, and will only be authorized in extraordinary circumstances. Applicants should assume that any costs incurred before the start date on the Federal Notice of Award will not be authorized.

D.7 OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS - NOT APPLICABLE

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1. CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation.

1. Quality of the Project Idea: Proposal clearly describes issue/problem to be addressed. Project goals and activities are concrete, relevant, realistic, and non-political in nature.
2. Project Planning: The applicant and partner organization, participants and beneficiaries are clearly identified. The work plan is realistic and enables project objectives to be achieved during the project performance period. Appropriate and innovative methods are used to meet project goals.
3. Institutional Capacity: Applicant and partner organization clearly demonstrate their experience with the proposed subject matter, and their ability to successfully implement the joint project.
4. Program Monitoring and Evaluation: Project Plan should provide sufficient detail on program monitoring and evaluation during the project performance period, as well as demonstrate an understanding of potential risks and challenges associated with the project.
5. Cost Effectiveness: Budget demonstrates efficient use of funds, appropriate to achieve project goals. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be consistent with project plans and activities.

E.2. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Embassy will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated in this NOFO. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Embassy grant panels for advisory review. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Public Affairs Officer and/or Grants Officer of the U.S. Embassy Moscow. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Embassy's Grants Officer.

E.3 ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND FEDERAL AWARD DATES

September 1, 2016

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1. FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Embassy's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the Embassy program office coordinating this competition. Due to the anticipated volume of applicants and limited staff, the Embassy unfortunately cannot provide individual feedback for unsuccessful applicants.

F.2. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of grant agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

F.3 REPORTING

The award issued under this NOFO will require both programmatic and financial reports on a frequency specified in the award agreement. Disbursement of funds will be tied to submission of

these reports in a timely manner. All other details related to award administration will be specified in the award agreement. The point of contact for questions or issues related to the administration of the grant/cooperative agreement will be specified in the award agreement.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

a) For questions about this announcement, contact: Jennifer Washeleski, U.S. Embassy Moscow, Public Affairs Section, Bolshoy Devyatinskiy Pereulok 8, Moscow 121099, Russian Federation; Tel: +7 (495) 728-5242; Email: US-RussiaP2P@state.gov

All correspondence with the Embassy concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Embassy staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

b) For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.

c) To inquire about the process for obtaining a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), please email AQM-NICRA@state.gov.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Embassy representative without prior approval of the U.S. Embassy Moscow Public Affairs Officer and/or Grants Officer. Explanatory information provided by the Embassy that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Embassy reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.